

At-Grade Communication Cabinets

Seattle Municipal Code amendments



Seattle City Council Transportation Committee
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September 9, 2014

SDOT's mission & vision

Mission: delivering a first-rate transportation system for Seattle.



Vision: a vibrant Seattle with connected people, places, and products.

SDOT's core principles



Presentation overview

- Background
- Existing conditions
- Proposal
- Next Steps



Background

- Some communities (Beacon Hill and Central District) have poor broadband access and have advocated for changes
- SMC Title 15 does not currently regulate placement of cabinets in right of way



Existing conditions



- Current Director's Rule 2-2009 requirements create unpredictable process for both residents and project proponents
 - Restricts broadband expansion in some areas
 - No mitigation requirements
- SMC Title 15 needs to be revised for SDOT to effectively regulate program

New policy proposal

- Adopt new Title 15 legislation to direct siting of communication cabinets in the ROW
- Eliminate need for Director's Rule to define placement and outreach standards
- Supersede existing DR 2-2009

Balancing priorities

- In 2013, SDOT met with stakeholders and developed the following priorities for the legislation:
 - Improve broadband deployment, especially in underserved areas
 - Keep our public spaces free from visual clutter and in a state of good repair
 - Ensure other priorities for public spaces are still viable, including green stormwater infrastructure, gathering areas, tree canopy coverage, gardening and other community building goals

Stakeholder input

- January to March 2014, convened stakeholder advisory group to discuss policy proposal and refine legislation for deploying new at-grade communication cabinets in right of way.
- Stakeholder advisory group consisted of:
 - communication service providers (CenturyLink, AT&T, Comcast, Wave, and Verizon);
 - community organizations (Upping Technology in Underserved Neighborhoods, Beacon Hill Community Council);
 - City departments (SDOT, DoIT, SCL, OED); and
 - City advisory boards (CTTAB, SPAB)

Incentivize smaller cabinets

- Incentivize smaller cabinets (less than 36" tall or 18 ft³ in volume)
- Update setback and clearance standards
- Establish maximum cabinet size of 66" tall or maximum volume of 36 ft³



Higher outreach standards for larger cabinets

Larger cabinets (over 36" tall) would require:

- Verification that cabinet could not be installed underground, on a pole, or on private property
- Public notice
- Visual mitigation screening in residential areas



Example of vinyl wrap mitigation

Visual mitigation examples



Before



After

vinyl wrap mitigation



Landscape screening

Examples of visual mitigation screening in residential areas

Maintenance standards

To address complaints and maintenance issues, service providers shall:

- post contact information on all existing and new cabinets
- Submit quarterly reports to SDOT describing all complaints received and how they were resolved



Next steps

9/9/14 and 9/23/14	Council Transportation Committee reviews legislation
9/29/14	Full Council can take action on legislation (if voted out of Transportation Committee)
30 days from Mayor's signature	Legislation takes effect and DR 2-2009 is superceded
180 days from effective date	Maintenance report due
3 rd Qtr 2015	Program evaluation

Questions?

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